

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 18700

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, UR

SUBJECT: WILL BREZHNEV BECOME A MEMBER OF THE SOVIET ACADEMY
OF SCIENCES?

1. A SOURCE CLOSE TO ACADEMICIAN SAKHAROV TOLD US NOV 29 THAT HE UNDERSTOOD THAT A MOVE WAS AFOOT TO ELECT BREZHNEV TO MEMBERSHIP IN THE ACADEMY OF SCIENCES. BREZHNEV WOULD BE ELECTED A FULL MEMBER OF THE ACADEMY IN TIME FOR THE ANNOUNCEMENT TO OCCUR JUST BEFORE OR IN CONNECTION WITH THE CELEBRATIONS FOR HIS 70TH BIRTHDAY ON DEC 19. BREZHNEV'S ELECTION, TO THE PHILOSOPHY AND LAW DEPARTMENT OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCES SECTION OF THE ACADEMY, WOULD BE BASED ON "HIS ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF MARXIST-LENINIST THOUGHT AND HIS ACTIVITIES FOR PEACE IN THE WORLD."

2. OUR SOURCES SAID THAT BREZHNEV COULD NOT BE MADE AN HONORARY MEMBER, SINCE THAT HONOR WAS RESERVED FOR FOREIGNERS. IT WOULD BE BENEATH HIS DIGNITY TO BE ELECTED A MERE CORRESPONDING MEMBER. OUR SOURCE SAID THAT ELECTIONS TO THE ACADEMY NORMALLY TAKE PLACE AROUND THE 10TH OF DECEMBER AND THAT THIS TIMING WOULD BE PERFECT FOR BREZHNEV'S ELECTION. THE ONLY FORESEEABLE PROBLEM, ACCORDING TO OUR SOURCE, STEMMED FROM THE FACT THAT IT WOULD BE DESIRABLE FOR BREZHNEV TO BE ELECTED UNANIMOUSLY. UNFORTUNATELY FOR THE ORGANIZERS, THE
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ACADEMY OF SCIENCES IS THE ONLY INSTITUTION IN THE

SOVIET UNION TO WHICH ELECTION IS GOVERNED BY GENUINE
SECRET BALLOT. OUR SOURCES NOTED THAT IN A FREE BALLOT
"SAKHAROV'S NEGATIVE VOTE WOULD NOT BE THE ONLY ONE."
OUR SOURCE CLEARLY FELT THAT SOME WAY WOULD BE FOUND TO
SECURE UNANIMOUS ELECTION IF IT WERE FINALLY DECIDED TO
GO THROUGH WITH THE PROJECT.

3. COMMENT. WE HAVE, OF COURSE, NO WAY OF CHECKING
THE VALIDITY OF THE REPORT, ALTHOUGH WE ARE FAIRLY CON-
FIDENT THAT THE SOURCE IS REPORTING ACCURATELY.
HOWEVER, WE DO FIND THE STORY QUITE PLAUSIBLE GIVEN THE
CURRENT SPATE OF HONORS ACCORDED TO THE GENERAL SECRETARY.
MATLOCK

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